



FEBRUARY TIP SAVINGS: \$100-\$300/YR

Avoided Emissions of CO₂: Up to 100 lbs./YR

\$USTAINABILITY \$AVINGS TIP

HARVEST MULTIPLE BENEFITS WITH RAINWATER COLLECTION

Free water boosts plant growth and reduces potential pollution

February is within our winter rainy period so it's a great time to consider rainwater harvesting for your landscape. Even with the low rainfall amounts in the low desert (about eight inches a year), rainwater harvesting can be well worth the effort with the potential of capturing over 7,000 gallons annually off of a typical home rooftop. Not only will you be able to save on your water bill, but your plants will look better too. Rainwater is salt-free and contains lots of minerals and nutrients that will boost plant growth. An added benefit of capturing rainwater is that it reduces runoff into storm drains, meaning less pollutants (pesticides or fertilizers from yards) get carried to our waterways, rivers or into our groundwater.

A typical home rooftop can collect 500 gallons of water from just ½-inch of rain. That's enough to flush a toilet over 300 times.

Rainwater harvesting can be as simple as directing runoff to basins around your plants, to more complex systems including gutters and storage tanks (cisterns). Most property owners can design simple water harvesting systems to meet the needs of their existing site. However, designing water harvesting during new construction allows you to be more elaborate and may even include cisterns, pumps and a delivery system.

WATER HARVESTING DESIGN TIPS

1. Create several small to medium water catchment areas in your landscape using berms and swales.
2. Mimic nature by creating a desert wash in the landscape that distributes the water to the planted areas – not to the street.
3. Use landscape and paving materials that allow water to penetrate into the soil and to the plant roots. **DO NOT USE PLASTIC** under the granite. Materials such as decomposed granite and open or permeable paving blocks work well.
4. If your system includes water storage tanks, use screens over openings to keep out mosquitoes.

CHECKLIST FOR SAVINGS

- ☐ **Learn more** by attending our Living Green Workshop on Feb. 12, **Harvesting Rainwater for Your Landscape (Graywater Too)**. Visit www.mesaaz.gov/sustainability or call (480) 644-4400.
- ☐ **Call (480) 644-3306** to request a free booklet titled **Harvesting Rainwater for Landscape Use**.
- ☐ **Visit** our online water harvesting resources at www.mesaaz.gov/conservation.
- ☐ **Find books** on harvesting rainwater at the City of Mesa libraries, or visit www.mesalibrary.org/research/living-green.aspx.
- ☐ **Look into state tax credits** available for water harvesting and graywater installation at www.azdor.gov/TaxCredits/WaterConservationSystems.aspx.

\$START \$AVING

Start saving on your water bill while doing your part for *building a sustainable community*. Visit our Web site for more sustainability savings tips at www.mesaaz.gov/sustainability.

Learn to live Green